

A N
E S S A Y
TOWARDS A
DEMONSTRATION
OF THE
Scripture - Trinity.

By *Philanthropus Londin.*

To which is added,

A LETTER to the Reverend
Dr. CLARKE, Rector of St. James's,
Westminster; concerning the Difficulty
of reconciling PRESCIENCE and
FREE-WILL.

By another H A N D.



L O N D O N.

Printed for J. NOON, at the *White-Hart*
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ESSAYS

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Dr. C. B. R. to the Reverend
W. H. B. the Difficulty
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THE PREFACE.

I*T is the peculiar Glory of the Christian Religion, that it treats Men, as Men; that is, as reasonable Creatures. It obliges them to practise no unreasonable Duties, and to believe no unreasonable Propositions: Nay, on the contrary, an impartial Study of its Doctrines, would furnish them with an invaluable Treasure of useful Knowledge; and a diligent Practice of its Precepts, would promote such Habits as must necessarily make them happy. Our holy Religion requires not only a reasonable Service, but a reasonable Faith too; it requires our Assent to no Propositions, but such as it's fit for a reasonable Being, after an impartial Examination of them, to yield its Assent to.*

A Proposition is intelligible, or understood, when the same Ideas the Speaker intended to convey by it, are excited in the Mind of the Hearer; or in other Words, when the Hearer knows what he is to assent to: for there is a vast difference between assenting to this general Proposition, That A speaks a Truth, and giving an assent to that particular determinate Truth, which A speaks.

When God reveals a Proposition to B, what does he do, but make known a certain determinate Truth to him? Now to suppose this reveal'd Proposition, after the Revelation of it, to be unintelligible to B, is to suppose it both known and unknown, to him at the same time, which is not only absurd, but a Contradiction in Terms.

There is a Sett of Gentlemen, who, out of a misguided Zeal for God and his Revelation, mightily decry the Use of Reason in Religion, as not being its proper Province; and cry up the Belief of certain Mysteries, which, I'm apt to think, neither they, nor any body else, can understand. But that reasonable Creatures may use their Reason in religious, as well as civil Matters, is as evident, as that a reasonable Being should always act reasonably. To allow

PREFACE. V

low Men the use of Reason in civil Affairs, but not in religious Concerns, is to allow them to act reasonably in Matters of less importance; but to oblige them to act unreasonably in those of infinitely greater; the Inexpediency, not to say the Ridiculousness, of which, is very apparent. If I cannot by the right Use of my rational Powers demonstrate the Being and Perfections of God, how can I satisfy my self that our Bible contains a Revelation from him, and has nothing in it unworthy of him? But if my Reason may deceive me in examining the Contents of this Revelation, why may it not do so in proving the Existence of its Author? and then farewell all Religion, both Natural and Reveal'd. If I have no Idea of God, how can I convince an Atheist? If I have no Idea of one God, how can I convince a Polytheist? But if I have an Idea both of the Existence and Unity of God, and can by clear Deductions of Reason prove both the one and the other, I have sufficient Data for the Conviction of a reasonable Trinitarian. And then, as for those Mysteries, in which so many seem to place the chief of their Religion, by denying Communion to those who dissent from them, they are either reveal'd Propositions; then they are intelligible, and all the Mystery lies
in

in their own human Additions to, or obscure and intricate Explications of, a clear Revelation; or they are unreveal'd: then I have nothing at all to do with them.

I have not attempted a Confutation of the Trinitarian Scheme, which I profess is either altogether unintelligible to me, or absolutely inconsistent with it self; but however, I have aim'd at a Demonstration of this Proposition, That the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are three distinct Spirits, of which the Father only is God; which Proposition, if I have been so happy as to succeed in the Proof of it, does entirely confute that whole Scheme.

The Advantage of the Method I have pitch'd on, seems to lie here, that a Flaw in the Reasoning may sooner be discover'd in this, than any other.

I am so fully satisfy'd of the Goodness of my Cause, that I believe it will bear a rigid Demonstration; and if I should miscarry in the Process of this Proof, I shall be persuaded it was owing to the unskilful Management of the Author, not to the Weakness of the Cause I defend; and shall live in hopes that this rude Essay may excite some abler Pen to do justice to so important a Truth.

The

PREFACE. vii

The Reader will see I have kept close to my Subject, and avoided all Harangues or Addresses to the Passions. I leave such Meannesses to them, who think their Cause requires something else besides Reason and Scripture, to support it. I have endeavour'd to promote the Truth with a Christian Temper, avoiding all Reflections on those who differ from me: Nay, I look on the involuntary Errors of my Christian Brethren, rather as their Misfortune, than their Crime, and therefore think it my Duty to pity and pray for them, as unhappily misled into Error; not censure and condemn them, as wilfully departing from the Truth.

*I would not therefore be understood by this Discourse, to charge the Trinitarians with professing to believe a Proposition they see to be absurd in itself, or derogating to the Honour of God the Father in its Consequences. I am fully persuaded, an ardent Love to their dying Redeemer, puts them on advancing his Honour to an Equality with the peerless Majesty of his God and Father. I don't doubt but their grateful Piety to their Saviour, will be rewarded with the Discovery of every important Truth, when they arrive at that blessed Place, whence all hurtful
Error*

Error is for ever banish'd: There they shall be taught (perhaps by Christ himself) what is the Honour respectively due to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. To each of which three glorious Persons, be ascrib'd all due Honour, Gratitude, and Praise, both now and for ever. Amen.

I would not therefore be understood by this Preface, to charge the Unitarians with professing to believe a Proposition they see to be absurd in itself, or derogating to the Honour of God the Father in its Consequences. I am fully persuaded, no ardent Lover to their dying Religion, but their on advancing her Heavens to an Equality with the Father's Majesty. I don't doubt, that their grateful Praise to their Father, will be rewarded with the Discovery of every important Truth, when they arrive at that blessed Place, whence all happy

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THE grand point I have undertaken to make out is this ;
That the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are three distinct Spirits, of which the Father only is God.

The method I intend to pursue, is to premise a few *Definitions* and *Axioms*, whereby I shall prepare the way for a Series of *Propositions*, in which the main force of the demonstration lies.

Definition 1.

God is an absolutely underiv'd Spirit, possess'd of all perfections ; consequently of supreme dominion.

B

God,

God, I say, is a *Spirit*, one, and but one individual numerical Spirit. He is an *absolutely underived Spirit*, having never deriv'd his Existence from any other Being, in any manner whatsoever. He is *possess'd of all Perfections*, whether in kind or degree; and has *supreme Dominion*, having neither superior nor equal, being *subordinate* to none, nor *co-ordinate* with any. This is that first and best of Beings, call'd *God*; the reason of which title or appellation, is that absolute and independent dominion he exercises over the whole rational Creation; for *Godhead* signifys Dominion: To have Dominion, is to be a *God*: To have supreme Dominion or Godhead, is to be *God*. God has supreme Dominion, underiv'd and independent; whosoever derives dominion and authority from him, really partakes of Godhead, and is rightly call'd a *God*; but not *God*. From what has been said, it appears, that *God*, or a *God*, has a relative, not absolute, signification; just like the word *King*, which conveys the idea of a particular person standing in such a relation to others; which is evident from hence, that when that relation ceases, the person loses his right to that title. The word *God* is certainly a relative term, *Deut. xxvi. 17. Thou hast avouched Jehovah to be thy God — and Jehovah hath avouched thee for his peculiar People. Exod. vii. 1. And Jehovah said*

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 3

said to Moses, *See, I have made thee a God to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy Brother shall be thy Prophet.* So *Angels* are call'd *Gods* in the Old Testament, *Psal.* xcvi. 7. *Bow to him* (or prostrate your selves before him) *all ye Gods*; tho in the New Testament they never have this title ascrib'd to them.

Qu. Whether upon God's introducing his First-begotten (the *Messiah*) into the World, the good Angels were not divested of that dominion and authority, which gave them a right to the title of Gods, under the Old-Testament dispensation, *Col.* ii. 15?

And whether it was not in token of their voluntary subjection to this great Person, that they were commanded to bow to, or prostrate themselves before, him, *Heb.* i. 6?

If these *Querys* be answer'd in the affirmative, the reader will easily see the reason of their losing the title of Gods, upon the expiration of that authority, which was the sole foundation of it.

Corollary 1.

All God's Perfections are as absolutely underiv'd as his Existence.

Corollary 2.

All derivation of Existence is inconsistent with supreme Godhead; because *God* is underv'd.

Since therefore *Creation* and *Generation* imply derivation of Existence, I conclude, that a created or begotten Spirit can't be God.

Corollary 3.

God is the first Cause and original Author of the Universe: This follows from his underv'd Existence.

Corollary 4.

Therefore, whosoever else is represented as the Author or Cause of all things, or as having authority and dominion over the Universe, can be *at best*, but a second Cause and subordinate Ruler. The *former* flows from the impossibility of there being two first Causes; the *latter* from the incompatibility of Co-ordination with Supremacy.

Corollary 5.

All Inferiority is inconsistent with supreme Godhead; because every *inferior* wants

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 5

wants that Perfection, which constitutes another his *Superior* ; but the want of *any one* Perfection is inconsistent with the possession of *every one*.

Definition 2.

A Creature is whatever has a derivative Existence.

Corollary 1.

Seeing 'tis impossible for the same Being to be deriv'd and underiv'd at the same time, (and if not at the same time, at no time) no Creature can be God.

Corollary 2.

A Creature can have none but deriv'd Powers or Perfections ; because he has a deriv'd Existence.

Definition 3.

A Person is an intelligent Agent, or an intelligent active Being ; that is, whatever has an *understanding*, and a *will*, is a Person : And since *Spirit* is a word of the same import, I shall take the liberty to use them promiscuously.

Corol-

Corollary.

Since one *understanding* and one *will* constitute one Person ; three understandings and three wills constitute three Persons. If therefore A, B, C be prov'd to have each of them an understanding and a will distinct from the other two, it follows, that A, B, C are three Persons, or Spirits.

Definition 4.

A Man is a Body of such a determinate shape as we commonly call a *human Body*, animated by an intelligent active Being, or Spirit.

See Mr. *Locke's* Essay concerning human Understanding, B. 2. Chap. 27. §. 8. For, I presume, 'tis not the idea of a thinking or rational Being alone, that makes the idea of a man in most people's sense ; but of a body, so and so shap'd, join'd to it. B. 2. Chap. 12. §. 6. and B. 4. Chap. 6. §. 15.

When I call a Man, a *Person*, I would be understood only with respect to his immaterial part, which only is intelligent and active : the Body being inert and unactive, can't come into the idea of a person ; tho it be a constituent part of the idea express'd by the word *Man*.

Corol-

Corollary 1.

Hence should an Angel, or unembod'ed messenger of God, animate a human body, he might properly be said to be, or become, *a Man.*

Corollary 2.

Hence Christ was a real man, on supposition of his body's being animated by the WORD, $\alpha\lambda\phi\omega$, the immediate Former of all things.

Scholium.

I think proper to observe, that I conceive of the Soul, or Spirit, upon its beginning to animate a Body, as confin'd within the space taken up by that ; and therefore since human Bodys are finite or circumscrib'd, their Souls must be so too.

Corollary 1.

Since *God* is omnipresent, and therefore can't be circumscrib'd or confin'd within any finite part of space, he can't animate a human body ; that is, he can't become *a Man.*

Corol-

Corollary 2.

Every man is a finite Being, as made up of two finite parts ; therefore no *man* can be *God*, because he can't be finite and infinite at once. And since what was once ~~an~~ *infinite*, can never become *finite* and *vice versa* ; it is impossible for *God* to become a *Man*, or a *Man*, *God*, at different times.

* *Axiom 1.*

There is but one *God* ; that is, there is but one Person, or Spirit, that is absolutely underiv'd, possess'd of all perfections, &c.
Def. 1.

Corollary 1.

Every other Being, whether Matter or Spirit, derives all it is, and has, from God.

Corollary 2.

Since there is but one underiv'd Spirit, (*Ax.*) and all his Perfections are underiv'd,

* By *Axioms*, I mean not only self-evident Propositions, but such also, as every thinking Person that professes himself a Christian, will readily allow me to take for granted at present ; they being easily deduc'd from uncontroverted Principles of Reason, or Revelation, or both.

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 9

(*Cor. 1. Def. 1.*) and since every derived Being can have only derived Perfections, (*Cor. 2. Def. 2.*) it follows, that every derived Perfection argues a derivation of Existence. If then I prove any one Power of A to be derived, I may infer A to be a Creature; and consequently all the rest of his Powers to be derived.

Axiom 2.

The Scripture explain'd by it self, and by right Reason, is the *Rule* to determine this Controversy by, on account of its being a matter of pure Revelation. And in explaining a particular Text, regard must be had both to the Subject or Person spoken of, and to the whole strain of the rest of Scripture; so that nothing must be predicated of A, inconsistent with the rest of A's Character; or, one Text must not be made to contradict many.

Axiom 3.

When the signification of a Word is determin'd in any particular Text, we ought to keep to that signification, unless forced by the Context, or the nature of the Thing spoken of, to another.

Corollary.

Since therefore *personal Pronouns* sometimes denote distinct Beings or Persons, they must always do so, unless a good Reason can be given to the contrary, from the Context, or the Nature of the Thing spoken of.

Axiom 4.

An individual Perfection cannot belong to two distinct Persons; and *vice versa*, two Persons can't have the same individual Perfection; because then they would be the same individual Person.

Suppose A and B two distinct Persons; the *Wisdom* of A, is not the same individual Wisdom with that of B; because A's Wisdom may be destroy'd, and he become an Idiot, whilst B remains as wise as ever. And so the same individual Thing might be the Subject of contrary Predicates at the same time; which is absurd. Then might Z be at once in being, and out of being, derived and underived, &c. which are Contradictions in Terms.

Corol-

Corollary.

If it be proved that A and B have a Perfection of the same Name, as *Wisdom*; but that of A is underived, and greater than that of B, which is derived; we may conclude, 'tis only the same *specific* Perfection; and consequently that A and B are distinct Persons: And *vice versa*, if A and B are distinct Persons, they can never have the same *individual*, tho they may have the same *specific* Perfection.

Axiom 5.

If the same Perfection, as *Holiness*, be appropriated to A in one Text, and ascrib'd to B in another, A must not be understood to possess it exclusive of B; but only independently, or in a peculiarly high degree; or else the word must be used in two senses.

Axiom 6.

A and B are said to perform the same Act, when the one does it by the influence of, or by ability or commission receiv'd from the other.

Thus we say, Sir *Christopher Wren* built *St. Paul's*; tho the Under-workmen laid the Materials together: 'Tis enough that

they, each of them, contributed their part to raise that noble Pile of Building.

So if A hires B to murder C, both A and B are said to have murder'd him.

When *Joseph* is said to be the doer of whatsoever the rest of the prisoners did, *Gen. xxxix. 22.* that expression can only respect the influence he had over his companions, or fellow-prisoners.

Proposition 1.

The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a Person.

He is throughout the Scripture represented as a reasonable Being, possess'd of Self-consciousness; as viewing, prescribing Laws to, and forming a judgment of, the Actions of other intelligent Beings. But it will be sufficient to produce two Texts, which evidently prove him to have the grand Characteristicks of a Person, which are Understanding and Will. *Def. 3.*

Matt. xxiv. 36. But of that day and hour knoweth no one, no, not the Angels of Heaven; but my Father only.

Matt. xxvi. 39, 42. O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. Where Christ, in an agony, desires the cup might pass from him, if it were consistent
with

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 13

with his Father's Will ; otherwise he patiently resigns himself up to, and acquiesces in, his Father's disposal.

Again, the Father is expressly call'd a Spirit, *Joh. iv. 24. God is a Spirit* ; where the Context determines the word *God* to the Father, *ver. 21, 23.*

Proposition 2.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is a Person.

This undoubtedly follows from his being a real Man, which is evident from the following Texts. *Joh. viii. 40. But now ye seek to kill me, a Man that hath told you the truth. Joh. i. 30. This is he, of whom I said, after me cometh a Man, who is prefer'd before me. See also Joh. x. 33.—7. 46.—9. 11.—18. 17.* He was indeed a Man approv'd of God, among the *Jews*, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him, *Act. ii. 22.* that is, enabled or commission'd him to do. He was a Man, whom God anointed to be Mediator between himself and the degenerate race of *Adam*, *1 Tim. ii. 5.* Now since in the Idea of *Man*, is contain'd that of an intelligent Being, as a constituent part of it ; and since Christ is a Man, he must be a Person. *Def. 4.*

But

But further, his *Understanding* or *Intelligence* is evident from *Joh. ii. 24, 25. He knew all Men, and he knew what was in Man.* *Luke ii. 52. Jesus increas'd in wisdom, &c.* *Nay, Col. ii. 3. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

His *Will* or *Agency* is prov'd from *Joh. xvii. 24. Father, as for those, whom thou hast given me, I will (or desire) that where I am, they also may be with me.*

How obedient was he to his Father! how did he go about doing good to Mankind! what affections of love and grief, &c. do the Scriptures make frequent mention of! Can this be an unactive, an unthinking Being?

Scholium.

As Christ was a real Man whilst on Earth, so he continues to be the same, since his ascension to Heaven: for he ascended both Soul and Body; his Body having undergone that considerable Change, which was necessary to its being a fit inhabitant of those purer Regions; that is, 'tis now a *spiritual* Body, a pattern of that Glory which our rais'd Bodies shall be advanc'd to. 'Tis very observable, that the Apostles in their Sermons and Epistles, compos'd after our Saviour's Ascension, speak of him as
being

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 15

being *still* a real Man, only with this difference, that whilst on earth, he is describ'd as in a suffering condition, but now in a triumphant and glorious one.

Corollary.

If Christ be a real Man, he can be nothing but a Man, or nothing inconsistent with his being a Compound of a human Body and a finite Spirit.

Proposition 3.

The Holy Ghost is a Person.

His *Understanding* is evident from 1 Cor. ii. 11. where he is said to *know* the things of God.

His *Will* is clear from 1 Cor. xii. 11. —*dividing to every Man severally as he wills.*

There are several other *personal* Properties ascrib'd to the Holy Ghost in Scripture; as that, *He may be grieved*, Eph. iv. 30. *He witnesseth*, Rom. viii. 16. *He is a comforter, or advocate*, Joh. xv. 26. *He teacheth*, Luke xii. 12. *Speaketh*, Act. x. 19, 20. *Sendeth*, Act. xiii. 4. *Forbiddeth*, Act. xvi. 6.

He is consider'd as an intelligent Being in an ample manner, throughout, *Joh. 16.*
and

and is frequently styl'd emphatically *the Spirit* ; therefore he must certainly be a Spirit, or Person.

We see then, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost have each of them the Characteristicks of a Person, *viz.* Understanding and Will : therefore each of them singly consider'd is a Person ; consequently complexly consider'd, they are three Persons ; that is, the Father, together with the Son and Holy Ghost, are three Persons. *Cor. Def. 3.*

But as Scripture, when it speaks of any one of these Persons *singly*, expressly asserts or supposes his being a Person ; so when it treats of them *together*, it does just the same, as we shall see in the following Propositions.

Proposition 4.

Jesus Christ is a distinct Person from the Father.

For they have distinct *Understandings*, since Christ knew not what the Father knew, Mark xiii. 32. *But of that day—knoweth no one, neither the Angels—nor the Son ; but the Father.* As here the Knowledge of the Day of Judgment is expressly deny'd of
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SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 17

the Son ; so in *Matt. xxiv. 36.* (a Text parallel to this) it is appropriated to the Father. Now the same Spirit could never know and be ignorant of the same thing at the same time. The same individual Knowledge could not be greater and less ; consequently the Knowledge of the Father was not the same individual Knowledge with that of the Son's ; therefore they were distinct Persons. (*Cor. Ax. 4*)

Observe also the mutual Knowledge the Father and Son had of one another, *Matt. xi. 27. No one knoweth the Son, but the Father ; neither knoweth any one the Father, but the Son.* The Knowledge the Son had of the Father, could not be distinct from the Knowledge the Father had of the Son ; unless they were distinct Spirits or Persons. See also *Joh. x. 14, 15. As I know my sheep, and am known of them, so the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father.* The Knowledge of the Father and Son is as distinct, as that of Christ and his Sheep.

They have distinct *Wills*, *Joh. vi. 38. For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. Joh. v. 30. I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father, who hath sent me.*

Again, the *Testimony* of the Father was distinct from the *Testimony* Christ bore to

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himself,

himself, Joh. v. 31, 32, 36, 37. *If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true; there is another that beareth witness of me:—But I have greater witness than that of John. — and the Father himself — hath born witness of me.* If John the Baptist was a Witness, ver. 32. and the Father a distinct Witness from John, because a greater, ver. 36, 37. and both of them creditable Witnesses; the Testimony of the Father was distinct from that of the Son, whose Testimony to himself in his own Cause, had not been true, or worthy of the Jews credit and belief. Again, Christ says he was not alone, but He and the Father; Joh. viii. 16, 17. and he shews, that as the Jewish Law required two Witnesses, so here were *two*; for he bore witness to himself, and the Father that sent him bore witness of him, ver. 18. Now if the Father and Son were two Witnesses, they must be two Spirits. However difficult it may be to evince the justness of our Saviour's Reasoning from the Law of Moses, which required two Witnesses distinct from the party concern'd, because they were to bear witness to him; yet the use I make of this Text is certainly fair, it being only to prove Father and Son two distinct Witnesses.

If Christ and his Father were not distinct Persons, how could he say, Joh. xii. 44. *He that believeth on me, believeth not on me,*

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 19

me, but on him that sent me? How could their Love be so distinct, as is supposed Joh. xiv. 21. *He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him?* that is, not only my Father, but I my self will also love him. How could he pray to his Father, Joh. xvii, unless he pray'd to himself? Did he pray to himself, that if it were *his own* will, the cup might pass from him? and when he immediately subjoins, *Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt*, Mat. xxvi. 39. did he subject his own Will to his own Will? or can the same Spirit have a Will and a Will, the one subjected to the other?

I might also argue from the *personal Pronouns*, I, Thou, We, &c. Joh. xiv. 23. *If any one love me—my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, &c.* See Corol. Ax. 3.

Proposition 5.

The Holy Ghost is a distinct Person from the Father and the Son.

I. From the *Father*; as being given and sent by him, Joh. xiv. 16, 26.

II. From the *Son*; as being sent by him, Joh. xvi. 7, 13, 14. *But if I depart, I will send him* (the Comforter) *un-*

himself, Joh. v. 31, 32, 36, 37. *If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true; there is another that beareth witness of me:—But I have greater witness than that of John. — and the Father himself — hath born witness of me.* If John the Baptist was a Witness, ver. 32. and the Father a distinct Witness from John, because a greater, ver. 36, 37. and both of them creditable Witnesses; the Testimony of the Father was distinct from that of the Son, whose Testimony to himself in his own Cause, had not been true, or worthy of the Jews credit and belief. Again, Christ says he was not alone, but He and the Father; Joh. viii. 16, 17. and he shews, that as the Jewish Law required two Witnesses, so here were *two*; for he bore witness to himself, and the Father that sent him bore witness of him, ver. 18. Now if the Father and Son were two Witnesses, they must be two Spirits. However difficult it may be to evince the justness of our Saviour's Reasoning from the Law of Moses, which required two Witnesses distinct from the party concern'd, because they were to bear witness to him; yet the use I make of this Text is certainly fair, it being only to prove Father and Son two distinct Witnesses.

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to you ; —but when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, —he shall not speak of himself ; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak : —He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

All three Persons are several times joined together in such a manner, as clearly to denote a real Distinction : See *Mat. xxviii. 19. Job. xiv. 16. — xv. 26. Rom. viii. 11. 2 Cor. xiii. 14.*

I have proved from Scripture, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are three distinct Persons ; inasmuch as each of them is throughout that Book spoken of, as having an Understanding and Will distinct from the other two, (*Ax. 2d. and Corol. Def. 3.*) And indeed, they must be three different Beings, or three different Parts, Relations, or Considerations of the same Being or Spirit. Now the scripture Expressions are by far too strong for the latter cases ; besides the absurdity of supposing either three completely intelligent voluntary Parts of one intelligent Being ; or the same Being in one capacity, the Sender and Begetter of it self in another capacity ; *ex. gr.* The Father *sending* himself, as Holy Ghost ; *begetting* himself, as Son, at the

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 21

the same time that he is unbegotten, as Father. I say, since Scripture and Reason conspire to reject these latter cases, the first must take place; *viz.* They are three distinct Spirits, not three different Parts, or Considerations, or Relations of the same Spirit.

Now these three Spirits must either be equal or unequal.

I shall now proceed to prove, that the Son and Holy Ghost are unequal and inferior to the Father.

When any Person is said to be unequal and inferior to another, it may be either in respect of his *Original*, or his *natural* or *moral Powers*.

If A derive his Existence from the will and power of B, whether by *Generation* or *Creation*, he is inferior to him with respect to his *Original*.

If A receive Knowledge, &c. from B, or is less knowing, &c. than B, he is inferior to him, either with respect to the *derivation* or *degrees* of his *natural Powers*, or both.

If A receive commission to exercise authority or dominion over others, from B, or is sent or employ'd in any less honourable errand or work by B, he is inferior to him, with respect to his *moral Powers*; and is subordinate to him, or his Messenger and Servant.

Now

Now surely 'tis more honourable to give than to receive; to send than to be sent; to issue out a Commission, than to act by it; to have every one act according to our own will, than to act according to the will of any one; to communicate Existence and natural or moral Powers, than to receive them. The Person communicating is *superior*, and the Person receiving is *inferior*.

Proposition 6.

Christ Jesus is inferior to the Father.

1. In respect of his *Original*, as a Son to a Father; Acts iii. 13. *The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his son Jesus, &c.* Ver. 26. *God having raised up his son Jesus, &c.* See also *Joh. viii. 54.* 1 *Joh. i. 3.* Now tho' some Sons do not (properly speaking) receive their Existence from their Fathers, who are only the *Instruments* God makes use of, to introduce a new Creature into the world; yet Christ is certainly *such* a Son as receives his Existence from his Father; not as an *Instrument*, but as a proper *efficient Cause*.

2. The

2. The natural Powers and Endowments of his mind, however capacious and enlarg'd, are spoken of as inferior and subjected to the Father.

His *Knowledge* was inferior to the Father's in *degree*, since he knew not the day of judgment, *Mar. xiii. 32.* which the Father had an exact foreknowledge of; and since he needed a particular Revelation from God, to acquaint him with the several Fates and Periods of his own Church, *Rev. i. 1.* Nay, whatever fulness of treasures of wisdom and knowledge he might have, yet it pleased the Father, that all this *Fulness* should dwell in him, *Col. ii. 3.* — *i. 19.* that is, he derived it from the Father, and depended on him for the continuance of it.

His *Will* was inferior to the Father's, because *subject* to it, *Luke xxii. 42. Job. v. 30.*

3. All his *Authority* and *Dominion* was derived from the Father. The *derivation* of his *Authority* from, and its *subordination* to, the Father, is evident from hence; that the Father, who made him Head over all things, *Eph. i. 22.* was himself the Head of Christ; *1 Cor. xi. 3.* And notwithstanding he committed *all* Judgment to his Son, *Job. v. 22.* yet a time will come,

come, when the regal Jurisdiction he *receiv'd* from the Father, must be deliver'd up to him again, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24, 28.

But to conclude ; the Inferiority of the Son to the Father is put past dispute, by *Joh.* xiv. 28. *The Father is greater than I.* For in whatever respect the Father is greater or superior to the Son, in that very respect the Son is less, or inferior to the Father.

Corollary 1.

Since Christ is a *Son*, he has a derived Existence, *Corol.* 2. *Def.* 1. and therefore is not an absolutely underived Spirit ; which is part of the Idea express'd by the word *God*.

Corollary 2.

Since Christ has a *limited* Knowledge, and that dependent on his Father's Will, he is not possess'd of *all Perfections*, neither in kind nor degree. For an absolutely all-perfect Being is possess'd of every Perfection in the highest degree possible, independently on any other.

Corollary

Corollary 3.

Since Christ's Dominion is but *subordinate*, he is but *a God*; for 'tis supreme Dominion from whence a Person is denominated *God*.

If any one upon comparing these *Corollarys* with *Def.* 1. and 2. thinks fit to call Christ *a Creature*, meaning nothing but a deriv'd Being, of finite Powers, subordinate to the first Cause, I have nothing to object against it; only let me caution him in a friendly manner, lest by an unguarded application of that Word to our blessed Saviour, he insensibly entertains as low and diminutive an Idea of our great Deliverer, as our Trinitarian Brethren have constantly affix'd to that Word. We should always endeavour to promote in our minds the highest esteem for Him, to whom, under God, we owe all the Happiness we have or hope for, here or hereafter. But yet as on the one hand, in point of *gratitude* to so singular a Benefactor, we should heartily rejoice in the Honour God has exalted our Lord Jesus to in the highest Heavens; so on the other hand, in point of *duty* to our God and his God, we should not dare to adorn even a dying Redeemer with supreme Godhead, the incommunicable Glory of his God and Father. In reality, there is no medium between an underiv'd, and a de-

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riv'd

riv'd Being; the supreme and a subordinate Ruler; the invisible God and his Image, (*viz.* Christ) who is the First-born of every Creature, *Col.* i. 15. So that we must either say, our Saviour is the invisible God himself, and no Creature; or else that he is the Image of the invisible God, and the First-born of every Creature; that is, the first of Creatures, and the most like the invisible God.

Proposition 7.

The Holy Ghost is inferior to the Father and the Son.

1. He is represented as at the disposal of the Father; given and sent by him; *Joh.* xiv. 16, 26.

2. He is also represented as at the disposal of the Son, *Joh.* xv. 26. and acting by commission from him, *Joh.* xvi. 13, 14.

Now since Christ is inferior to the Father (*Prop.* 6.) and the Holy Ghost is inferior to Christ, he is much more inferior to the Father.

Having prov'd Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be three distinct Spirits, of which the two latter are inferior to the first, I might conclude the Father only to be God; because God must be superior to every other Being. Now every one will grant me, that
supreme

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 27

supreme Godhead is somewhere to be found among these three Persons :

Either in a Conjunction of all these ; then God would be three Spirits, not one Spirit only.

Or, in each of them; then there would be three Gods, contrary to (*Ax. 1.*)

Or in one alone, exclusive of the other two ; then it must be the Father.

But I rather chuse to give a direct Proof of the Father's supreme Godhead, in

Proposition 8.

The Father of Jesus Christ, and he alone, is God.

For, 1. He alone is *deriv'd*, which is an unalienable Property of God. (*Def. 1.*) Christ Jesus has a derivative Existence, as being begotten, (*Cor. 2. Def.*) 1. Both Christ (*Prop. 6.*) and the Holy Ghost (*Prop. 7.*) have deriv'd Powers, and consequently a deriv'd Existence (*Cor. 2. Ax. 1.*) It remains therefore, that the Father only is *deriv'd*, or God.

2. He is superior to the Son and Holy Ghost, (*Prop. 6, and 7.*) and therefore he alone is God, (*Cor. 5. Def. 1.*)

3. He is represented as the *God*, as well as the *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Christ himself, *Joh. xx. 17.* by St. Paul, *Eph. i. 3, 17. Col. i. 3. Heb. i. 9.* by St. Peter, *1 Pet. i. 3.*

4. He is the *original Author* of all things, consequently *God*, (*Cor. 3. Def. 1.*) He created all things by Jesus Christ, *Eph. iii. 9.* and he made the World by Christ, *Heb. i. 2.* Now since Jesus Christ is introduc'd as the *Maker* of all things, *Joh. i. 3.* and the *Father* made all things by him; he can be but the *ministring* or *secondary* efficient Cause, (*Cor. 4. Def. 1.*) and the *Father* is the *primary* Efficient, or *original Author* of all things; therefore *God*: and consequently he only, (*Ar. 1.*)

5. He is the *original* and *supreme Governor* of all things; therefore *God*, (*Def. 1.*)

The Holy Ghost never has *Dominion* ascrib'd to him, much less *supreme Dominion*; therefore not only is not *God*, but is not a *God*.

Jesus Christ has all *Judgment* committed to him by the *Father*, *Joh. v. 22.* He was *ordain'd* of *God* to be *judge* of the *living*, and of the *dead*, *Acts x. 42.* The *Father* put all things under his feet, *1 Cor. xv. 27, 28.* and made him head over all things, *Eph. i. 22.* and gave him power over all *flesh*, *Joh. xvii. 2.* and gave all things into his hand, *Joh. iii. 35.*—*xiii. 3.* So that our *Saviour's*

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 29

viour's Dominion is deriv'd and subordinate to the Father's, who must consequently be the original and supreme Ruler.

6. Christ, the faithful and true Witness, expressly asserts him to be the *only true God*, Joh. xvii. 3. *This is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and him, whom thou hast sent, viz. Jesus Christ*: and the God of the Jews, Job. viii. 54. St. Paul says, the Father is the *one God, of whom are all things*, in contradistinction to Jesus Christ, the *one Lord, by whom are all things*, 1 Cor. viii. 6. the one God, and Father of all, as distinguish'd from the one Lord, Eph. iv. 6.

I would here note, that the Title of *the one Lord*, is as much appropriated to Christ as that of the *one God* is to the Father: so that as Jesus Christ, the *one Lord, by whom are all things*, is excluded from being the *one God*; so the *one God the Father, of whom are all things*, is excluded from being the *one Lord*; and that with very good reason, because 'twas God that made Jesus Lord as well as Christ, Act. ii. 36.

Corollary.

Since the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is an underiv'd Spirit; since he is the original Author, and first Cause of all things; since he is the original and supreme Governor
of

of all, or sole Monarch of the Universe, he is *God*; these Ideas being applicable to no other: For the Son and Spirit have been prov'd to be Persons distinct from, and inferior to, the Father.

Now let the Reader judge for himself (as he ought always to do) and try whether he can form any consistent ideas of the following Propositions.

1. *The Father, together with the Son and Holy Ghost, make up (or are) the one God.*

If any should lay down this Mathematical Proposition as a certain truth, $F + S + H = G$; and it be prov'd that $F = G$; does it not evidently follow, that $S + H = O$, in order to make the former Proposition true? How can the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost together be God, when there is but one God; that is, one Spirit, of whom my first *Def.* is predicable, and the Father be prov'd a Spirit, of whom all the Ideas included in the word *God* are predicable; unless the Son and Holy Ghost stand for nothing, are no Beings? And have I not prov'd them two Spirits distinct from the Father?

2. *The*

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 31

2. *The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three Persons, and one God.* Here are two distinct Propositions.

The first is this, *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three Persons.* If the word *Persons* expresses no determinate Idea, the Proposition has no Predicate; and therefore nothing is affirm'd of the Subjects: but if that Word has any meaning to it, it must signify *intelligent Agents, or Spirits.*

The Second Prop. is this, *The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are one God;* that is, in other words, *The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are one Spirit.* The Proposition made up of these two, is this, *The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three Persons, and one God;* that is, they are three Spirits, (*Def. 3.*) and one Spirit, (*Def. 1.*) ergo $F + S + H = 3$
 $P = P.$

3. *The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God; and yet there is but one God:* That is, the Father is an underiv'd Spirit, the Son is an underiv'd Spirit, the Holy Ghost is an underiv'd Spirit; and yet there is but one underiv'd Spirit. That I have not misrepresented the Meaning of this third Proposition, appears from hence, that if the Reader puts the Definition of *God* instead of the Word, he'll find

find that three Persons, each of which is *God*, are three underiv'd Spirits, &c. and yet 'tis suppos'd there is but one *God*; that is, one underiv'd Spirit: so that three underiv'd Spirits are one underiv'd Spirit, or $3 P = P$; as above.

Quest. 1. Are not three Persons, each of which is an underiv'd Spirit, three Gods? Just as when I say, *Peter* is a Man, *Paul* is a Man, *Timothy* is a Man; do I not plainly affirm *Peter*, *Paul*, and *Timothy* to be three Men, not one Man?

Quest. 2. If the Father, together with the Son and Holy Ghost, be God, how comes it to pass that the Father alone is called God, that the Son alone is called God, &c? Is the *Father*, Father, Son and Holy Ghost? Is the *Son*, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, &c?

If Christ be not God, nothing can prove him to be God; because nothing can prove a false Proposition to be true. But yet there are some Texts of Scripture, the misunderstanding of which has led some very pious people into the Notion of Christ's being the supreme God, which therefore deserve our serious Consideration. However this be, I can't help observing, that the Care taken by the Writers of the Scripture to secure the supreme Glory to God
the

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 33

the Father, and yet to give our Saviour Jesus Christ his due tribute of Praise, is very remarkable. It looks to me, as if the Spirit of God had foreseen the general spread of the Trinitarian Scheme; and, being zealous for the peerless Majesty of the Supreme Being, had designedly guarded against it. Thus where any particular Texts seem to raise the the Glory of Christ to an equality with his God and Father, we have always another directly calculated to cast a light on the former, and prevent its being misunderstood. The *former* Class of Texts seem design'd to aggrandize our Saviour, and to excite our Gratitude to express it self in the loftiest Sentiments of our great Deliverer, and most active Obedience to *him*, who being rich, for our sakes became poor; but is now exalted on the right hand of the Majesty on high. The *latter* Class of Texts place God on the Throne, and teach us, while we confess Christ Jesus to be our Lord, to do it to the Glory of God the Father, *Phil. ii. 11.*

I shall produce some instances of Texts, which speak loudly the Grandeur of our Saviour's Person; and shall shew, that they are far from proving his Equality with God, who is the Author and Bestower of whatsoever he is and has.

I. 'Tis urged that Jesus Christ is honour'd with the Title of *God*, Joh. i. 1. which Title the supreme Being hath appropriated to himself, Isai. xlv. 21, 22. *And there is no God else besides me, a just God and a Saviour ; there is none besides me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth ; for I am God, and there is none else.*

I answer, the word *θεός*, (translated *God*, Joh. i. 1.) may be rendred either *God* or *a God*. The former rendring supposes Christ possess'd of supreme Dominion, contrary to *Prop. 6.* where his Dominion is proved to be *derived* ; consequently not supreme : the latter, therefore, denoting only subordinate Dominion, is to be prefer'd. St. *John* then asserts our Saviour (or the *λόγος*) to be *a God*, (*θεός*) ; not intending to advance him to an equal Honour with the Father, who is (*ὁ θεός*) *God*.

An equal Honour can no ways be concluded from the Word *θεός* ; because the Scripture gives the same Title to Angels and Magistrates, the works of our Saviour's own hands. To *Angels*, Pf. xcvi. 7. *Worship* (or bow to) *him all ye Gods* : And to *Magistrates*, Pf. lxxxii. 6. *I have said ye are Gods, and all of you are children of the Most High* : ver. 7. *But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.* Joh. x. 34, 35. *If he called them Gods,*
unto

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 35

unto whom the word of God came, &c. that is, who were commission'd and authoriz'd to act by God. Now if the Works of Christ's hands are called *Gods*, why may not Christ, tho the Work of God's, be honour'd with the Title of *a God*; especially seeing he has an undoubted Dominion over them, who on account of their Dominion over others have that Title given to them?

Again, the WORD, tho he be call'd *a God*, yet he is said to be with *God*; not *one part* of a Spirit with *another part* of the same Spirit; but *one Spirit* called the WORD, with *another Spirit* called *Gods*, in contradistinction to *him*, who in the same Verse is called *Gods*. But effectually to prevent any ill Consequences arising from such a seemingly unguarded Expression, we are told, *Heb. i. 8, 9.* that this WORD, or Son of God, had a Person above him, who is called *his God*. *But to the Son, he saith — Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows,* or those that were partakers with thee in Dominion, on which account they were called *Gods*.

Whether or no Christ be called *a God*, *Rom. ix. 5.* I cannot determine, till I am more fully satisfy'd about the Person the Apostle had in view. If he meant the *Father*, then that Passage should be rendred; *God, who is over all, be blessed, &c.* or

who (that is Christ) *is over all, God be blessed, &c.* But if he meant the Son, *Jesus Christ*, it should be rendred, *who is a God over all, blessed, &c.* and then *a God over all*, can signify no more, than Head over all, *Eph. i. 22.* that is, Ruler over all. Now the Headship or Dominion of Christ is either inherent and underiv'd, or communicated and deriv'd. The *former* it cannot be, because God the Father gave him to be Head over all things, and put all things under his feet. And if the *latter* is true, it is manifest, that he, who put all things under him, must be excepted and exempted from his Jurisdiction, *1 Cor. xv. 27.* therefore his Dominion is neither universal nor supreme, but limited, deriv'd and subordinate: so that the Scripture has sufficiently guarded against our confounding his Person and Dominion with that of the Father's.

Our *English* Translators therefore, who seem to understand this Text of Christ, had better, in my judgment, have rendred that Passage thus; *who is a God over all, blessed for ever, Amen*; because by styling our Saviour *God* (not *a God*) they ascribe supreme Dominion to him, which is absolutely inconsistent with the Supremacy of the Father: for he is not *supreme*, who is only inferior to none; but he, who is superior to all.

II. 'Tis

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 37

II. 'Tis argu'd, that our Saviour is one and the same Being with his Father, from his saying, *Job. x. 30. I and the Father are one.*

I answer, this Text fully proves the Power of Christ to secure his faithful ones from being over-power'd and destroy'd by their implacable Enemys. 'Tis as if he had said; "It is one and the same thing
" whether you are in my hands or my Father's; you shall be as effectually secur'd
" by me, as if God himself had taken you
" under his immediate Care and Protection." But that our Saviour hereby intended to make himself *one Being* with his Father, can no more be prov'd, than that he intended to make all Believers one Being, when, *Job. xvii. 11.* he prays his Father to keep—those, whom he had given him, and immediately adds, *that they may be one as we are.* See also *Ver. 22. and the Glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one:* so *Ver. 21. that they may be one in us.* St. Paul also makes all Christians, as it were, *one Man*, *Gal. iii. 28.*

Now the same Form of expression which proves Christ one Being with the Father, proves all Believers one Being; because they are *one*, just as Christ and the Father are *one*: but Believers are not one Being, but

as

as many Beings as they are distinct Persons ; so no more is Christ and his Father one Being, because two distinct Persons, *Prop. 4.* So that unless Christ was a distinct Being from, and at the same time one and the same Being with, the Father, this Text can have no reference to an *Oneness* of Being.

III. We have a magnificent Representation of Christ, Col. ii. 9. *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily* ; which is almost, if not quite, equal to that given us, *Joh. x. 30. I and the Father are one* : for as *there* the Father and he are said to be one, *here* he is describ'd as having all the divine *Fulness* constantly residing in him, and that not in type and figure, but in reality ; therefore it is concluded by some that he is God.

I answer ; that we may not misunderstand this Text, let us consider ;

1. Whatever be meant by this *Fulness*, it cannot be the same individual Fulness with the Father's, (*Ax. 4.*) because Christ is prov'd a distinct Person from the Father, (*Prop. 4.*) If it be not the same, it must be deriv'd from the Father, agreeable to *Col. i. 19. It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell* ; and if it be deriv'd, it must prove Christ inferior to the Father :

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 39

Father : and therefore unless the same thing can prove A both equal and inferior to B, this *Fulness* can never prove Christ equal to, much less the same Being with the Father, who is God. (*Prop. 8.*)

2. *All the Fulness of the Godhead* is of the same import with *all the Fulness of God*, Eph. iii. 19. and therefore this latter, which all Believers may be fill'd with, will prove them to be *God*, as strongly as the former, which it pleas'd the Father should dwell in Christ, proves his supreme Godhead; but the one is absurd, therefore the other is so too.

IV. Some plead from the Scripture's ascribing the work of *Creation* to Christ, Col. i. 16, 17. that he is *God*; because the supreme Being appropriates this work to himself as his peculiar Glory. *Isai. xlv. 24. Thus saith Jehovah — I am Jehovah, that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the Heavens alone, that spreadeth forth the earth by my self:* and the Adoration the twenty four Elders pay to him that sat on the throne (that is, God) *Rev. iv. 4.* is founded on his having created all things.

I answer, these Scriptures may be easily reconcil'd by *Ax. 6.* For tho, strictly speaking, the Act of A is not the Act of B, and there-

therefore A and B cannot, in the same respect, be said to perform the same individual Action; yet common Speech will justify the predicating the same Action of A and B, when they both had a concern in it; when A communicated the skill and ability of doing it to B; when A order'd and directed, B officiated and acted under him as his minister and servant. Now the Scripture being written in the common, not in the philosophical Language, is not to be suppos'd to use all the accuracy of a mathematical Discourse; it speaks as the common people talk, not as the Mathematicians write. What wonder then, that the same Work is ascrib'd both to Christ and to God, especially when we are assur'd they did it not in the same respect? for God created all things by Jesus Christ, *Eph. iii. 9.* and God made the Worlds by his Son, *Heb. i. 2.*

If therefore A is said to do the Action Z, and B is said to do the same; and again, A is said to do Z by B; is not A in a different way or respect the author of Z, from what B is? and must not B be consider'd as acting ministerially under A? The Case is easily apply'd to God and Christ. See *Cor. 4. Def. 1.*

I might urge in answer to the Objectors, that if God the Father *only* did create (according to *Isai. xlv. 24.*) then Christ, or the Son, did not *at all* create (contrary to the Supposition in the Objection it self) unless

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 41

less the Son be the Father, whereas he is already prov'd a distinct Being, or Person, from him, (*Prop. 4.*)

V. Christ did many wonderful works above the power of any Creature; therefore, 'tis argu'd, he is God.

I answer, had *his* Miracles really exceed-
ed all the Power God could communicate
to a deriv'd Being, they must have been
wrought by God himself, and so they had
been none of *his*; for no Being can exert a
greater Power than it has: no finite Being
can perform an Action which requires an in-
finite Power to the performance of it.

The way to judge what kind of Power
was exercis'd in the Miracles wrought by
our Saviour, is to see what he himself, and
others immediately concern'd, say of them.
Now the Argument our Saviour draws from
this mighty Power exerted by himself,
would lose all its force, on supposition of its
being infinite, and underiv'd. See Joh. v. 36.
*The works which the Father hath given
me to finish (or perform) the same works
that I do, bear witness of me, that the
Father hath sent me.* A Power deriv'd
from another may argue a Mission from that
other Person; but a Power inherent and
underiv'd, can never do so: Therefore *Mis-
sion* being a deriv'd Perfection, his Person
must

must be also deriv'd, by *Cor. 2. Ax. 1.* and consequently his Power did not exceed that which God could communicate to a deriv'd Being, and does not prove him God. Again, he says, *Joh. x. 25.* that he did these Works in his Father's name, and that they bore witness of him, *viz.* that he was commission'd from the Father. 'Tis upon the account of the Assistance God gave him in working his Miracles, that he is said *to be with him*, *Act. x. 38.* *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with Power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppress'd of the devil; for God was with him.* Nay, so careful is he to give his Father the Glory of these mighty Works, that he says, *Joh. xiv. 10.* *The Father, that dwelleth in me, he doth the works;* as tho, because he perform'd them by a receiv'd Power, he himself had no hand in them.

St. Peter expressly says, *Act. ii. 22.* that *Jesus of Nazareth* was a *Man* approv'd of God, among the *Jews*, by miracles and wonders, and signs which *God did by him.* Now tho God may justly be said to do what he enables a Creature to perform; yet no one else can, with any propriety, be said to do what nothing less than an Almighty Power can effect; because Omnipotence is an incommunicable Attribute of God.

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 43

I can't help observing, that the Spectators of our Saviour's Miracles constantly ascrib'd them to a Power *foreign* to, not *inherent* in, him. They were too well acquainted with the Miracles of *Moses*, and others of their Prophets, whom they knew to be *Men* like themselves, to argue any thing more than an extraordinary Assistance in the case of our Saviour.

Nicodemus, upon a conviction of our Saviour's ability to work Miracles, *came to Jesus by night, and said unto him; Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these miracles which thou doest, unless God be with him.* Joh. iii. 2.

Upon the Multitudes seeing Jesus cure a Man of the Palsy, Mat. ix. 8. *they wonder'd, and glorify'd God, who had given such power unto Men.*

So upon his raising a Widow's Son from the dead, Luke vii. 16. *Fear seiz'd on all, and they glorify'd God, saying, that a great Prophet is risen among us, and that God hath visited his People.*

Neither of them conclude the Author of these Miracles to be God: but *the one* argues, that he was a Teacher come from God, and that God was with him; *the others*, that God must give him Power, and that a Prophet was risen among them.

If the Reader be pleas'd to consult the following Texts, *Mat.* xv. 31. *Mark* ii. 12. *Luke* v. 25, 26. — *xiii.* 13. — *xvii.* 15. — *xviii.* 43. he will see how frequently Glory is given to God, on account of Miracles wrought by Christ; not only by the Spectators, but by those who receiv'd the benefit of them.

One of the most considerable of our Saviour's Miracles, was his raising the Dead, an Instance of which we just now consider'd: but he claims to himself a Power, not only of raising others from the dead, but himself also; and without doubt his Claim was just: but yet this Power being deriv'd, his Claim to it is no ways repugnant to those Texts, whence I have prov'd his own Derivation from the First-Cause, or God. Nay, his owning the receipt of this Power from the Father, naturally leads us to ascribe the Glory of the original Communication, and Restoration, of Life, to the Father only.

Christ's Power to raise *others* is evident from his having Life in himself; and the Derivation of this Power is prov'd from hence, that the Father gave to the Son to have Life in himself, *Joh.* v. 26. His Power to raise *himself* is express'd, *Joh.* ii. 19. *Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* *Joh.* x. 18. *I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again:* and the Derivation of this Power is
acknow.

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 45

acknowledg'd in the latter part of this same Verse, *This commandment have I receiv'd of my Father*, as well as from *Cor. 2. Ax. 1.* the rest of his Powers being deriv'd, this must also, God having no one deriv'd Power. However, tho Christ had undoubtedly a Power of raising himself; yet in fact, he did not do it, as is clear from the whole Current of Scripture, where the Father is perpetually declar'd to have rais'd him up from the dead. See *Act. iii. 15. Whom God rais'd from the dead, whereof we are witnesses.* This God appears, Ver. 26. to be the Father of Jesus. See also, *1 Cor. xv. 15. And if Christ be not risen — Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testify'd of God, that he rais'd up Christ.* Neither does it appear, that it ever enter'd into the Apostle's Thoughts, that Christ rais'd himself.

VI. The Universality of Christ's Dominion is argu'd from such Texts, as *Rom. ix. 5. Heb. i. 2. Eph. i. 20, 21, 22. Phil. ii. 9. Dan. vii. 14. &c.* If then his Dominion be universal, 'tis supreme; consequently he is God.

I answer, an *universal Dominion* (properly speaking) is such as extends over all Persons whatsoever, without exception; consequently, is always *supreme*: but since
God,

God, who gave our Saviour his very extensive Dominion, must in all reason be excepted from the number of the Subjects of it; our Lord's Dominion can neither be universal nor supreme. His Right indeed to rule us, and our Obligation to obey him, is uncontested; but let us ever remember, that God constituted him Heir of all things, put all things under his Feet, and gave him to be Head over all things, &c. lest when we confess by our Words and Actions, that Jesus Christ is Lord, we rest in him, and rob God the Father of his unalienable Glory.

One of the most glorious of our Saviour's regal Acts, is that of the *final Judgment*, whether we consider the Pomp and Solemnity of it, or the important Consequences of the several Sentences that shall then be pass'd on good and bad Men. We know God shall in Person judge no Man, *Joh. v. 22.* but he has appointed Christ the Judge of all under him, *Act. x. 42.* — *xvii. 31.* and 'tis fit he should receive a large Revenue of Glory on that account. The Father hath committed all Judgment to the Son, that all Men should honour the Son as they honour the Father, *Joh. v. 22, 23.* Now should any one imagine, that Christ claims an Honour to himself, equal to that which is due to the Father, he might easily be convinc'd of his Mistake, by asking himself, Whether a Judge in an human Assize has a
Right

Right to the same Honour, as the King, who grants him a Commission to act in his Name, and by his Authority, may lay a just claim to? And is not the Respect paid to a Judge on the Bench founded on the royal Commission, under which he acts? The only Inference then that can be drawn from the Father's committing all Judgment to the Son, is, that all Men should honour him *as well as* the Father; not, that they should honour him *as much as* the Father. A delegated Authority can never command equal Respect with that from whence it is deriv'd.

VII. Omniscience, we are told, is ascrib'd to Christ, Joh. xxi. 17. *Lord, thou knowest all things.* Joh. xvi. 30. *Now we know that thou knowest all things.* And thence 'tis concluded, that our Saviour is in such Texts as these advanc'd to an Equality with God, in respect of Knowledge; Omniscience being as peculiar an Attribute of God, as Omnipotence.

I answer, that *Omniscience* is as really a peculiar and incommunicable Attribute of God, as *Omnipotence*; but the Scripture never intended by those, and such like Expressions, to convey the Idea of Omniscience: for 'tis plain, the Disciples could not justly ascribe this to Christ, consistently with

with his being ignorant of any one thing; *Mar. xiii. 32. Rev. i. 1.* nor consistently with the Inference they draw from this pretended Omniscience; which is only, that he *came from God*, or was sent by God, *Joh. xvi. 30.*

Every one that is acquainted with the Eastern way of addressing their Superiors, will easily suppose 'twas a common Compliment paid their great Men and Prophets, to tell them, *they knew all things*; that is, their Knowledge was very extensive. Somewhat like this we have in *2 Sam. xiv. 20. My Lord is wise, according to the Wisdom of an Angel of God, to know all things that are on the earth.* The high Notion the Woman of *Samaria* had of the *Messiah's* Knowledge, is express'd by his *telling all things*, *Joh. iv. 25.*

Our Saviour's sincere Followers are said to have an *Unction* from the Holy One, and *to know all things*, *1 Joh. ii. 20.* Would any one from this Phrase infer the proper Omniscience of the Saints; I am apt to think he would be confuted by the Experience of every one of them.

So that we may conclude, *to know all things*, is a Scripture Phrase, denoting an *extensive*; but not an *unlimited* Knowledge.

Thus I have produc'd several Texts, which had the appearance of a repugnancy,
either

SCRIPTURE-TRINITY. 49

either to my main Proposition, or to some Texts; whence I endeavour'd to prove it. I have also attempted to shew the repugnance is but in appearance, not in reality; and have put the Reader into the way (if he be but master of the preceding Method of Reasoning) of solving other Difficultys of the same, or like nature, whenever they occur to his Mind.

What remains, but to exhort my Readers to act like Men that are accountable to God for the Use of their reasonable Powers? Let them first examine the Scripture Revelation, and judge for themselves; whether its Pretensions to a divine Authority are just, or no; and then let them explain its Contents in a consistency with itself, and the divine Perfections of its Author. Let them by all means beware of being betray'd into a piece of false Humility, mightily in vogue among a Sett of weak, tho honest Men; I mean, *the submitting Reason to Faith*, which is nothing else but renouncing *common Sense*, and embracing their favourite *Schemes* and *Hypotheses* in Divinity.

Let us all read our Bibles, that we may be better acquainted with God, and our selves; that we may know our Master's Will, in order to a conscientious Compliance with it. And if to this we add fervent Prayers to the God and Father of our Lord

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Jesus

50 *An ESSAY, &c.*

Jesus Christ; that, for the sake of his dearly beloved Son, he would grant us the Assistance of his Holy Spirit; we shall not only be secur'd from every destructive Error, but led into every Truth necessary to the faithful Discharge of our Duty here, and the final Possession of eternal Life hereafter.



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